

First Christmas by alexislord

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Summary:

Mike has Eleven over for her very first Christmas. It's kind of strange, but she seems to like it. Merry Christmas, everyone!

First Christmas

Eleven had never had a lot of things. She had never had loving parents to take care of her. She had never celebrated Christmas. She hadn't ever received presents, only rewards for doing what Papa...what Brenner wanted her to. But no days held special importance to Eleven in the facility.

Last Christmas, she had spent in the woods, throwing squirrels against trees to eat, something Eleven didn't even like to think about. She wasn't even sure how she spent that specific night, because all of them blended together and she didn't take the effort to keep track besides how many days had passed since she had seen Mike.

But this year, Mike was going all out for her. The Wheelers' home had decorations galore up when she went over. They had lights and a huge tree that Mike insisted she help them decorate.

Eleven even put their angel on top with her powers, Mike grinning at her, while Nancy made sure their parents weren't looking.

They made a gingerbread house, which Eleven told Mike seemed like far more trouble than it was worth. It ended up collapsing from the weight of the candy on the roof. Mike showed Eleven how to make sugar cookies and they decorated those with frosting. Eleven made a Mike cookie, even putting a watch on him and making a super comm out of candy, and Mike revealed her cookie likeness, bloody nose and all. She wrinkled her nose at him, but told him she really liked it.

After the whole party had shown up, they went down to the basement to have their own Christmas fun. Max and Lucas brought in snowballs from outside, assaulting Dustin, Mike and Will when they arrived. They threw one at Eleven, too, but she sent it right back into Lucas's stomach. Max laughed for minutes on the floor, unable to move and could barely breathe. Eleven laughed too, glad she could make someone smile. Maybe Max wasn't too bad after all.

After living with Hopper for awhile, Eleven learned how much she really loved sugar. No one ever gave her anything too sugary at the lab, so she hadn't really been exposed to all the deliciousness there was to offer until Benny had given her some ice cream. It was

amazing and she felt sad just thinking about him. He was a kind man, one Eleven wished she could visit and thank, but Benny was gone.

But not only did Eleven love sugar, that day she discovered a love of candy canes. Mike had given her some hot chocolate and he stirred his with a candy cane, so she did, too. He told her she could just eat one, while they were putting them on the tree as decoration, and since then, Eleven had been sneaking them off the tree all night. Needless to say, she was practically bouncing off the walls with her sugar high.

Dustin saw some extra decorations in a box and said, “hey El, you should float these around down here, and we can do a Christmas show!”

Normally, she didn’t like to use her powers when someone commanded her to, or even asked. Eleven had spent so many years with someone hovering above her, telling her exactly when and where and how she could use them, that she built up a resistance to it.

But this time, El shrugged. “Normally, I’d say no, but I’m on my fourteenth candy cane, so why not?”

They all laughed and sat together, quiet and excited for the event. Mike smiled, putting his arm around Eleven to settle in, before stopping. “Wait, how many?”

But Eleven smiled at him with her doe eyes, sheepishly, and Mike sighed, but pulled her closer, giving up. It was Christmas after all.

While Eleven floated Christmas ornaments and lights, Dustin started reading, “t’was the night before Christmas, and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.”

El had never heard the story before, so she had to improvise on the fly, using cookies and candy as props, as well as decorations and, at one point, the Star Wars ship she had refused to fly around what felt like so long ago now. That sent everyone into stitches, besides Dustin, who just grinned at her, pleased to finally see it.

The party went home, planning their own gift exchange for the next day. Hopper knocked on the door, there to pick up Eleven. She pleaded for another minute to say goodbye to Mike, and he agreed, telling her he'd be in the truck, wanting to keep it warm and give the kids privacy.

Mike and Eleven stood just on the inside of the doorway, looking at each other, standing close, while she thanked him for the day they had spent and he thanked her for being there and making it his favorite Christmas ever. Eleven smiled, tucking her hair behind her ear and looking down at the compliment. When she looked back up at Mike, she noticed something behind him she hadn't seen before.

"What's that?" she asked, pointing at something hanging from the ceiling.

Mike turned to look and said, "Oh, that's mistletoe. It's a Christmas tradition where you hang the plant from the ceiling and, if people are standing under it together, they have to kiss."

Eleven nodded, finding it stranger, but not as strange as Santa Claus or the tree in the house. Mike went to grab Eleven's coat from their closet and, while he was gone, Eleven had pulled the mistletoe from the ceiling, hovering it over their heads when Mike came back. He helped her put her coat on, none the wiser, until she said something.

"Mike, what is that?" El said, pointing straight up.

Confusion on his face, Mike looked up to see the mistletoe hovering and grinned, looking back at Eleven with a slight blush on his cheeks. Before he could say anything back, she leaned into him, kissing him with a little force, her arms around his neck, pulling him into her.

When they separated, resting their foreheads together, Eleven gave Mike an apologetic look. He looked confused, until El said, "sorry, I had to. It's the rules for mistletoe."

He grinned, laughing, and said, "no need to apologize." Mike nuzzled his nose against hers and El giggled, before hearing Hopper honk the horn on his truck.

"I gotta go, but thanks for Christmas, Mike."

They hugged and she walked down the path, towards Hopper's truck, a lovestruck goofy grin on her face.

It was official: Eleven loved Christmas.